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JOSHUA AUGUSTUS SWAN

In Memoriam

JANUARY 18, 1823 — OCTOBER 31. 1871



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JOSHUA A. SWAN.

MY DEAR CHILDREN : —

I give you here a few memorials of a life which ended before any of you could appreciate its strength or its sweetness.

Your father was strong in his love of truth and right, and he was full of that "sweetness and light" which comes from cherishing the high ideals that consecrate the inner life. Ever ready to sympathize with the feelings and wants of others, he habitually preferred their interests to his own, with a forgetfulness of self which is rarely exemplified to such a degree. He had a directness and simplicity of manner which always inspired confidence. This was perhaps an inheritance from his plain, industrious ancestors of the true New England type.

They were among the first settlers of Methuen. His grandfather, Joshua Swan, was born there July 12, 1755. When not yet

twenty years old, he took part in the battle of Bunker Hill. As the troops marched up the sloping hillside, probably not many of them, at that exciting moment, noticed that the turf beneath their feet was blue with violets. Joshua stooped to pick one, and placed it in his hat, — an incident that suggests the lack of uniform drill among those raw recruits. Little time was there to note the changed color of the turf when they descended that flowery hillside! But the associations of the day were not forgotten by Joshua Swan, who had the poetic instincts which reappeared in his grandson. He never let the anniversary of that battle pass without wearing a violet in his buttonhole to celebrate the day.

He served in eight campaigns, and was three years connected with Washington's own army, in various capacities. He was proud of having often shod the General's horse. He narrowly escaped death at the battle of Brandywine, and was at West Point at the time of Arnold's treachery. At the close of the war, he entered a claim for a longer term of service than any other man in Essex County.

He married, in 1787, Deborah Burbank, and had five sons and four daughters. His grand-

children delighted in hearing him relate his experiences in the war. On August 1, 1844, about fifty of his children and grandchildren gathered round him at a party in the woods. His health and faculties were then unimpaired. The next year he died, at nearly the age of ninety, March 25, 1845.

His oldest son, Joshua, your grandfather, was born January 10, 1788, at Methuen, where he attended school and was apprenticed to a master carpenter. He soon proved himself a very energetic young man, ready with his help where it was needed; and all his brothers and sisters were at some time assisted by him. In 1816 he went to Waltham, and entered the employment of Theodore Lyman, who had just established cotton-mills at that place. At the house where he boarded he met Olive Jones, of Lancaster, who was visiting her sister, and they soon became engaged.

She must have been a very beautiful woman then, for she was still beautiful in her old age, with a beauty which was not wholly due to her regular features and expressive dark eyes. It was the sweetness and serenity of her disposition, and her self-forgetting thoughtfulness for others, which invested her with a peculiar

charm to the very close of her life, in 1892, in her ninety-eighth year.

They were married at Lancaster on Thanksgiving day, December 3, 1817, and went directly to Waltham, where they lived until the removal of the company to Lowell, early in the year 1824. Their first child died in infancy; Maria was born July 24, 1821, and Joshua Augustus, January 18, 1823.

In Lowell, Mr. Swan took contracts for building machinery, and had the direction of a large workshop. After living several years in houses belonging to the company, and after two more children were born (Albert G., May 26, 1826, and Sarah J., July 21, 1828), they moved in 1830 into the house which was to be the family homestead for sixty years. Here their youngest child, Charles Walter, was born, February 6, 1838.

The house, which was of three stories and in the old colonial style, was built by Mr. Hale, the owner of extensive powder-mills on the Concord River. It was situated on high land, with a fine view of the open country. The estate contained nineteen acres of land, and for many years the farm, orchard, and garden were very productive.

When I first knew the place, in 1850, Hale's Brook ran by between green banks to the beautiful Concord River, which flowed under fine large trees at the base of Fort Hill. A picturesque foot-bridge with a stone arch spanned the river; and the winding foot-path along the bank was fringed with the abundant wild-flowers of the region, from the early violet to the late cardinal flower. The low roofs of the powder-works scarcely marred the rural aspect, but they were the entering wedges which led to the total destruction of the woods and the wild beauty of the locality.

Mr. Swan took a prominent position in the rapidly growing town of Lowell. He was selectman several years, president of the Mechanics' Association, 1834-35, alderman in 1837, representative to the General Court in 1839, and county commissioner from 1848 to 1851. His energy, good sense, and perfect integrity were recognized by the community, and he was held in high esteem. He died April 21, 1867.

His children were educated in the public schools, and the boys were then expected to learn trades. In reference to Joshua, Mr. W. J. Rolfe has recently written: "We were to-

gether at the Lowell High School. He was one of the older boys, yet I remember his personal appearance distinctly, perhaps because I had a great admiration for him. He was one of the boys to whom I looked up with a genuine respect. It did not surprise me that he became a clergyman." At the age of sixteen he reluctantly gave up his studies and entered the machine-shop, working full time with the other apprentices. He remained there a year, and his father wished him to continue longer, but too many thoughts and feelings were stirring in his head and heart to allow him to be content with any handicraft. His mother watched with anxiety his growing discontent, and used her influence to persuade his father to give him a college education. He never regretted the time spent in learning the use of tools, which afforded him in after years many hours of pleasant relaxation.

Early in 1841, some of his friends proposed to go to a Quaker school kept by Moses Cram at Clinton Grove, in Weare, N. H., and Joshua was allowed to join them and remain a year. It was a happy year of study and of thought amidst genial influences of nature and of friends. And ever after he loved to recall the

kindness of "Moses" (so the teacher was always called), who saw that the boys were in earnest about learning, and allowed them many liberties. They often took their books into the woods to study, or laid them aside for a long stroll. Here his talent for poetry began to develop, and his religious views to take on more definite shape.

The subjects of the simple verses written at this time show the tendency of his thought and feelings: "Contemplation," "Gethsemane," "Ye must be born again." He had been brought up in the Episcopal Church, where attendance on two Sunday services was required besides two sessions of the Sunday-school. The good Dr. Edson frequently examined the pupils himself, and Joshua respected the fine character of that venerable man, but soon began to question some of his points of doctrine. Then the works of Theodore Parker fell into his hands, and were read with intense satisfaction. They solved many of his doubts, and opened his mind to the free study and love of truth. He ever after looked up to Parker with deep gratitude and reverence as his spiritual teacher and guide. Yet he did not, like Parker, assume an attitude of antagonism to

other views. His nature was too gentle for sarcasm, too forbearing to judge others with severity.

Preparation for college was made in Lowell under the direction of Mr. Jewett and Dr. Hoppin. He came to Cambridge to continue his studies in January, 1842. On March 6, he was baptized and admitted to the Austin Street Church, and entered college the same year.

Mr. F. P. Appleton, his schoolmate and early friend, has recently written: "Well as I knew him, it was only in later years that I saw the uncommon power and width of his brain, and that he could do anything he chose to do, — in poetry, in science, or in practical work. But there was always the modest, quiet, gentle manner, the same kind, low voice, the same friend, and the same friendship." And Mrs. Appleton adds: "We often recall those old times, almost seeing again his bright smile, and hearing his ready repartee."

While in college he had little ambition for rank in the prescribed studies. The elective system was not then established, and not much prominence was given to his favorite studies, history and literature. He joined with his

friend John Austin Stevens in pursuing them. They had large note-books ruled for historical tables, and they made copious extracts from their favorite authors, — Carlyle, Goethe, Aristotle, Richter, Schiller, Lessing, Addison, Scott, Bulwer, T. Parker, etc. They made, also, lists of books to be read on the religions of the world, and other subjects, and abstracts of college lectures by Longfellow and Felton.

On graduation, in 1846, J. A. Swan was the class poet and F. J. Child the orator. Professor Longfellow's diary has this notice of the occasion: "July 16, Class Day. The oration by Child extremely good. . . . The poem was by Swan, with great skill in versification, and more poetry in it than in any college poem I remember."

One of his classmates urged him to publish some of his poems, and offered to attend to the business. A small volume appeared, with the title of "Prophecy of the Santon and other Poems." It won approval from Mr. Longfellow and other critics, but did not attract general attention.

The summer of 1846 was memorable to him for a journey through the woods of Maine with J. Austin Stevens. Taking a guide and

canoes, they penetrated the wilderness from the Penobscot to Quebec. Their adventures, entered into with the enthusiasm of youth, never lost their charm when recalled in after years.

In the autumn he entered the Divinity School, and deeply enjoyed his three years of study in the companionship of dear friends, of whom Samuel Longfellow was one, and another, F. P. Appleton, who long after thus refers to this period: "As I walk up Divinity Hall Avenue now, I ask myself, Where has the glamour gone? Was this cold, commonplace scene Eden once? And is it so now to any living soul? Perhaps, if such friendships as I once knew still survive."

But your father's most intimate friend at this time and ever after was Richard Manning Hodges, Jr. He frequently went to see him in their college days at his little study in the wing of his father's house on Waterhouse Street, but without meeting others of the family. He had acquired a habit of avoiding society, and was usually regarded as somewhat of a hermit. He had resolved, however, to seek the acquaintance of Richard's sister, when by accident they met at a lecture, and, at

the close of it, shook hands without introduction, walked home together, and soon became friends. This was in September, 1849. He then had rooms in the old house of Royal Morse, situated where Austin Hall Law School building now stands.

He had begun to preach, and was absorbed in reading and sermon writing. The works of Coleridge and Newman are mentioned in his diary. In the evenings, he frequently visited his friends on the opposite side of the common. Needing a bookcase, he went to Lowell, and, with his brother Albert's help, built one in two days in the old workshop over the shed, which, with its three picturesque arches, then connected the house and barn. The shed and barn were burnt by lightning September 1, 1873. The old home was a haven to which he frequently returned all through his life, and always found welcome and refreshment. The elms, which have long overtopped the roof, were saplings brought and planted by his hands.

After preaching several times in North Andover, he was invited to Kennebunk, Me., and accepted a call to remain there. The correspondence then began which led to our

engagement after his return to Cambridge, on January 1, 1850.

With my father and several friends I went to his ordination on February 6, 1850. In his diary he writes: "February 7. Yesterday my commencement was beautiful. No one could have fairer prospects. Let me then go to my work strongly and trustfully. Though somewhat lonely, I feel very cheerful, and begin already to feel that Kennebunk is my home. May I be useful here!"

"February 19. Love my place here better and better. There is a cordial kindness among the people that wins me entirely, and makes me resolved to do all in my power to help them."

"February 24. Preaching has seemed to-day like real earnest, and therefore pleasant work. I felt after the service as if I were really a worker in Christ's vineyard, and had the means of doing some good in the world."

Two sermons a week had to be written, and an address prepared for a weekly evening meeting.

But preaching is only one of the various duties of a country minister. He visited the schools constantly, and made a continual round of calls upon the people, taking a deep inter-

est in the pursuits and the experiences of all. For recreation he pursued the study of natural history. He calls Lyell's works "a grand preface to a grand study, — Nature's Autobiography."

One Sunday in each month he exchanged pulpits with Rev. J. T. G. Nichols, of Saco, and the previous week was usually passed at my father's house in Cambridge.

My family became much attached to him, and their love for him made the parting with their daughter less hard to bear. Our marriage took place April 16, 1851, the day of that fearful storm which swept away the lighthouse on Minot's Ledge, an open structure of iron which had only lasted as long as our engagement, having been completed January 1, 1850. The wildness of the storm prevented many guests from attending the wedding. The bridges were flooded, but one became passable in time for us to reach our train. The state of the weather made little difference to us, but it must have made the day a sad one to my family. They were never reconciled to our living so far from them, and offered us many inducements to live in Cambridge. In 1852, my aunt, Miss Donnison, built the house on

Berkeley Street expressly for us. It was leased on condition that it should be given up whenever we desired it. Owing in part to her persuasions, and partly from some feeling of discouragement, Mr. Swan offered his resignation in 1853, but so urgent were the entreaties of his parishioners that he consented to remain.

I approved of his decision, for I knew that his heart was in his work. My family were much disappointed, especially my aunt Catherine. But she thought more of our happiness than of her own, and when a good house was for sale in Kennebunk she bought and repaired it for us. We moved into it in the fall of 1858. Our first house was in a lonely situation, but the years passed there were happy ones. Elizabeth Quincy was born September 27, 1853. A little girl came in 1857, to breathe and moan a few hours and then pass away. In his diary my husband says, "I call her Edith." William Donnison was born January 1, 1859, Margaret Manning, July 19, 1862, and Olive Maria, April 15, 1864.

The minister's salary was \$800 at first, afterwards raised to \$1,000. But when the war came in 1861, reducing the incomes of many, he insisted on having his salary reduced. He

thought little about what he received ; he gave himself. The kindness of my father and of my aunt (my "fairy godmother," as I often called her) were continually felt in our home, and their own house was open to us at all times, and so, too, was the dear old home in Lowell.

When your father was weary with overmuch writing and preaching and consoling, nature always refreshed him, and whole days were often passed at the seashore or on the banks of the Mousam River. Sometimes he took longer journeys. The first summer of our marriage, my father took us to the White Mountains, and he often invited my husband to travel with him. After the war was over, they visited Washington, and went to Antietam and other battle-grounds. In 1866, we went with a party of friends to Niagara and Montreal, a journey full of interest to us both.

In winter, books were our great resource, and the evenings never seemed long while your father read aloud. Many volumes of Ruskin, Motley, Carlyle, Froude, and others are associated with those happy times. For, though often weary and at times discouraged, he was always happy in his devotion to his family and his people and his work, until his

health, which had been so uniform that he never had missed a service of any kind, began to fail in 1867. He then suffered from what seemed to be dyspepsia, but persisted in his usual routine of work until extreme weakness forced him to give it up.

On the 28th of May, 1868, the parish voted to give him six months' leave of absence. We went to Lowell and to Cambridge, and consulted Dr. Wyman and Dr. Hodges. Part of the summer was spent at the seashore in Beverly, where he formed a friendship with Professor Spencer F. Baird, with whom he then, and also at a later period, enjoyed some scientific explorations. He was always cheerful and uncomplaining, but he did not gain in health.

On August 20, he went to my brother's, where he received every possible attention, but became more and more feeble and almost helpless. A voyage to Europe had been long talked of, but it seemed a doubtful expedient. Now it was the only one left to try, and he himself became anxious to go. His brother Charles, just entering on the practice of medicine, and just engaged to be married, consented to leave all and go with him. My father and my aunt offered to pay their ex-

penses. I was to remain at my father's with our three little girls, and William was sent to Mr. Mack's school at Belmont.

Three days before the appointed day of sailing (September 3), your father's condition became so alarming that I entreated to be allowed to go with him. My dear parents consented to take charge of our children, and my aunt assumed the added expense.

On the way to New York, your father became totally blind, and could not stand alone. On reaching the steamer *Aleppo*, he was carried to the state-room, which was on deck, and lay there three days as helpless as an infant. Then he roused and asked to be taken to the open deck, and went, supported by Charles and the steward. After that he went out every day, gaining rapidly in strength. During this period of prostration he composed the verses called "At Sea," which are appended to this memorial. He also dictated his diary to Charles, and at a later period copied it out. When we entered the British Channel, he could walk and see, and went to a concert in Liverpool the day we landed, September 17. After a few days of rest at Chester, we went to lodgings in Leamington, and made excursions to

Warwick, Kenilworth, and Stratford-on-Avon. In London he was able to walk about with Charles, and in Paris he improved still more. Here we consulted Dr. Brown-Séquard, who gave much encouragement in regard to his recovery. After spending a few days in Geneva, we went by rail to Nice, drove in a carriage over the Cornice Road to Genoa, thence by steamer to Leghorn, to visit Pisa, and continued by sea to Naples, where we spent a month in sunny rooms on the Chiaia, opposite the park which was then called the Villa Reale. We tramped through the Pompeiian streets and ascended Mt. Vesuvius. We then went to Rome, where your father was the most energetic of the party, walking and driving every day, and keeping his pictorial diary, which I have in eight small volumes.

On January 22, 1869, he sent to his parish a letter of resignation, which was acted on at the next annual meeting of the society, when "they reluctantly yielded their assent to the dissolution of a union maintained so many years with uninterrupted harmony, with so much benefit to the people."

We were a month in Rome, and another happy month in Florence, and after a week of

delight in Venice, we went by the Brenner Pass to Munich and Dresden and Heidelberg; then to Paris, London, Liverpool, and sailed on April 27 in the *China*, which bore us swiftly home in eight days, the shortest passage that had ever then been made.

To return, bringing my husband restored to health, and finding all our dear ones well, was a wonderful termination to that journey, begun with such sad forebodings. We could never be grateful enough to those who made it possible, and the recollection of it was always a great source of pleasure to us.

The summer of 1869 we spent in Kennebunk, preparing to leave our house for the new minister, Mr. Vinal, to occupy. In November, we came to live on Berkeley Street, Cambridge. William returned to Belmont for the winter.

Your father now sought for some literary or scientific appointment, and obtained the position of secretary of the Boston Natural History Society. He entered upon his new duties May 11, 1870. The study of botany and entomology had long been his recreation. Now that his pastime had become a matter of business, he took it up with his usual assiduity. There was often a pressure of work which

kept him late at night, and he overtasked his strength. He refused to take a vacation the first summer, and continued at his post during an excessively hot season. The following summer (1871), he went off on a little trip to the woods of Maine with Mr. John Bartlett, and enjoyed it, but when he attempted to resume his work he was quite unfit for it. His old symptoms returned, and medicines did not relieve them. On the 7th of October, 1871, he left his desk in the library of the Natural History Society, never to return to it. As a voyage had restored him before, we hoped it might again, and my father, ever ready with help in time of need, went with us, October 14, to New York, intending to take us to Cuba. But Dr. Hammond, whom we consulted in New York, though giving much encouragement of his recovery, advised us to return home, which we did on October 21. His extreme weakness made the journey a painful one. He failed rapidly. Our devoted friend, Miss Charlotte E. Hatch, came from Kennebunk, to help me nurse him, and his mother and sisters came at his request two days before his death. His brother and mine and Dr. Wyman attended him. His weakness was such

that he said little; but whenever he spoke it was cheerfully and with a smile, bidding us not be troubled, for he was perfectly happy. When I said that the children were good, he exclaimed: "Yes, I do think we have a beautiful family of children, and if I should not live a week, I should feel that I have had all the blessings and happiness I could ask in this life." Half unconscious, he murmured, "Can I be of any service?" "Remember I am here for them, not for myself," and then he inquired about some invalids at Kennebunk. His last thoughts were with those to whom the best of his life had been given.

He passed quietly away October 31, 1871. His disease was an organic affection of the stomach.

The numerous expressions of sympathy and esteem, and the resolutions passed by various societies, proved that the beauty of his character had been appreciated by many.

You, my dear children, were too young fully to understand your loss, but not to retain a loving remembrance of your father. I trust that this little memorial will keep it fresh for you, and will give to your children some faint image of his rare personality.

And yet, in so slight a sketch it is difficult to convey the true impression of his life. Though so retired and unambitious, it was full and rich both in what he received and what he gave. His love of nature and his love of books were resources from which he constantly derived happiness, and no one could appreciate more than he did the joys of home and family love.

His warm interest in the people of his parish made his relations with them very intimate. He paid little attention to external appearances, but could perceive beneath them the real personality of each one. Such recognition always meets with a response, and forms a bond of mutual sympathy.

The children were especially dear to him. Some of the little ones, whom he at first took in his arms, grew up and were married by him, and almost seemed to belong to him.

It cost him great pain to sever all these ties and to give up his chosen work. If his life sometimes seemed monotonous or wanting in intellectual stimulus, he did not despond. The spirit of contentment was one of his most charming characteristics, and it always made an atmosphere of happiness around him.

The keynote of his life was the love of God and trust in His fatherly care. In his sermons he dwells on this theme. His life was inspired by it, and so became an inspiration to others, leaving behind an influence that may still be felt, even if unrecognized.

May it prove a blessing to his children and his children's children !

SARAH H. SWAN.

CAMBRIDGE, 1893.

COMMEMORATIVE NOTICES.

BOSTON SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY.

ON Wednesday, November 1, 1871, the President, after the following remarks, adjourned the meeting:—

“ I know not how to utter the deep grief I feel, and which I know is shared by you all, in the death of our dear companion, Rev. J. A. Swan, the secretary of this society. No one, I am sure, who has had the pleasure of personal intercourse with him but will feel that he has lost a near and dear friend. To me, his presence, even, has always seemed a benediction. I do not think I ever was so much impressed by the personal character of any man with whom I have come in contact as with that of Mr. Swan. He seemed always overflowing with love for, and a desire to aid, all about him. What might excite in other men feelings of anger or bitterness moved him only to sorrow, and no one was ever more charitable in his judgments of the acts of others. Truly, we have lost from our circle a man devoid of guile,

upright in conduct, lovable beyond expression, pure in heart, and faithful in every duty."

The following resolution was passed :—

"*Resolved*, That in the death of Mr. Swan, the society recognizes the loss of not only a highly efficient officer and member, but of an associate greatly respected for his attainments as a scholar, admired for his noble qualities as a gentleman, and loved for his manly virtues as a man and a Christian."

EXTRACTS FROM RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL PARISH IN KENNEBUNK,
NOVEMBER 16, 1871.

"*Resolved*, That we, the members of this Parish, sincerely mourn the loss we have sustained in the death of Rev. Joshua A. Swan, the minister over this Parish for so many years, which witnessed in him an ever-expanding love and a deep, unreserved devotion for his people. To him they returned their fullest confidence and most affectionate regard. . . .

"The benignant character of God manifest in man and in nature was the theme on which he most delighted to dwell, with an earnest zeal and solemn eloquence which commanded the attention of his hearers. . . . In the discharge of his parochial duties he was unsurpassed. . . . To serve and work for others was the dearest object of his life."

FROM THE CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

From Editorial Notice.

"Mr. Swan was one of those rare men who join a certain sweetness of character and life with a most conscientious fidelity, and whose memory is an enduring possession of the church.

"No pastor was ever more welcome to the homes of his parishioners, or more faithful in the discharge of his duties, or more beloved by his brethen in the ministry who had the good fortune to know him."

From Notice by Rev. J. T. G. Nichols.

"He was one of the manliest of men, at the same time one of the most tender and affectionate.

"He remarked, on leaving Kennebunk for his new home in Cambridge, that one of his greatest regrets was that 'the children whom he met would not know him.'

"For much of his power in the pulpit he was indebted to his winning manners out of it, and to the much he knew beyond the ordinary range of pulpit topics. . . . But it was his heart qualities that perhaps chiefly distinguished him. He made everybody love him. Two of the Beatitudes had singular application to him, 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' and 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' His loving smile and his kind, wise word in season had wonderful power to disperse cloudy feelings and to allay personal irritations. His was a character and

life on which those of us who best knew him can dwell without a shadow of pain to mar our recollections."

From Private Letters.

"The wonderful sweetness and joyousness of his nature have been a blessed lesson to many."

"How many pleasant days have I spent with him! In weariness and weakness I found no more effectual rest and refreshment than I got at his house. It did me good merely to come, in contact with his kindly and cheerful spirit.

"Few pastors have had a deeper place in the hearts of their people than he. With all his warm and strong sympathies he had only to live among people, and freely act out his nature, to be all that could be desired in that relation."

"I know my whole life is richer and better for having known him."

SELECTIONS
FROM
UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

THE SONG OF THE SOUTH WIND.

A FOURTH OF JULY ODE.

I COME forth from the Caribbees,
Those islands resting on the seas,
Where summer reigns undying ;
Where the soft malaria breathes its blast,
And the hurricane goes shrieking past
While the palm-tree bends its lofty mast,
And the orange groves are sighing.

My way is over seas afar,
Through flowery vales of Florida.
And across the rice plantation.
And mournful, oh, mournful, is the song,
Breathing of wretchedness and wrong,
I've learned while journeying along
This birthday of the nation.

For, ever as I floated on
Beneath the red and burning sun,
I heard a voice of wailing.
It echoed sadly to and fro
Along the Gulf of Mexico,
Where Mississippi's waters flow,
Downward to ocean sailing.

And where Potomac's ripples fall
In the shadow of the Capitol,
The ear of mercy paining,
Voices of bitterness and woe ;
Not loud and wild, but whispered low,
Such sounds as to the deep heart go,
As of a child complaining.

I saw God's image bought and sold
For pieces of the shining gold,
And like the dumb kine driven.
Upon his soul they put a spell
That to him it might never tell
He was of those whom God loved well,
And was an heir of heaven.

I saw a mother in the mart
Beg for the child, with broken heart,
That from her breast was taken.
And I breathed a sigh above her there ;
She gazed towards the sky so fair,
And prayed a wild and raving prayer,
Like a creature God-forsaken.

Yet still from lake to ocean's shore
I hear the booming cannon roar
In one continuous thunder.
And church-bells fling their jangled lay
O'er roofs and tree-tops far away, —
Not as they call on the Sabbath day
With the prayerful stillness under.

Sound ye the clanging bell no more ;
Bid hush the cannon's sullen roar ;

 Their din is idly given.

And shout no more for liberty ;

Ye are not, never can be free

Until the curse of slavery

 Forth from the land be driven.

Send down the flag from every mast,

So proudly courting heaven's blast !

 It should trail sad and lowly !

The stars and stripes in mocking wave :

Stars for the free, stripes for the slave ;

His benison God never gave

 To a union so unholy.

Your church-spire points in its mute love

Beyond the eternal stars above,

 A guide to wanderers given.

But southward steady looks the vane,

And bids ye hear the clanking chain,

And tells of woe and want and pain

 As that tells ye of heaven.

Oh, ever as the south wind swells,

List to the warning word it tells,

 Nor in the good cause falter.

Or a rising storm-cloud ye may see,

Whose bolt will shatter Freedom's tree,

Whose flood will quench eternally

 The flame on freedom's altar.

THE EQUINOX.

ALL day long the wind and rain
Have dashed upon the window pane,
And damp mists gather on the glass,
Which stop the light that fain would pass.

There is no blue ; but clouds of lead
Drag low and sullen overhead ;
A spectre-mist comes from the sea
Like a great bird flying heavily ;

And weaves its web round hill-tops gray,
Stalks through the woods, nor bends a spray ;
And now it lifts, and now subsides,
Like the ebb and flow of ocean tides.

The wind sighs sadder in the pine,
And heavier hangs the dripping vine ;
The brooklet in its deep, dark bed
Only mirrors a sky of lead.

The beggar hugs his ragged cloak
To shield him from the tempest stroke ;
And patient cattle crowd together
In the dull and dreary weather.

Now cleaves the cold mist to the ground
And nought is visible around ;

And nought is heard but rustling leaves,
And dull rain dropping from the eaves.

The storm's dark spirit o'er me broods
Like mist above the drooping woods ;
And thoughts that quicken 'neath her wing
Are of the note herself doth sing.

So as the vine droops from the wall,
As mournfully the raindrops fall,
My cheerful thoughts droop in their play,
And my better feelings shrink away.

And in my soul is mirrored nought
Of the stormy day, but stormy thought :
Of hearts that yearn, fates that deny
The praying earth, and leaden sky.

KENNEBUNK, *October 4, 1849.*

LONGINGS.

WE will be strong, whatever fate hang o'er us ;
In noble purpose and in truth confide,
And when heart-joys ebb mournfully before us
Will wait with patience the returning tide.

We will be strong ; nor in the night of sorrow
Be bowed to earth as hoping no relief.
There is no night but it shall have a morrow,
And joy may penetrate the depths of grief.

We sigh for truer sympathy ; we weary
Of formal friends whose hearts beat not with ours ;
Beneath their look the world seems dull and dreary,
Cold are its hills, and leafless are its bowers.

We would be loved with pure and fond affection,
Which knows no shade of change and fears for
nought,
And when alone would have the recollection
That kindly ones are with us still in thought ;

Would have one bosom in whose deep recesses
The thoughts we long to speak may garnered be ;
The holy secrets which the heart confesses
There only, where it loves most tenderly.

The soul should tell its wants, its aspirations,
That it may hear some sympathetic tone ;
We gain redoubled strength by these vibrations
Of thoughts which are, and yet are not, our own.

Bright scenes of beauty, with their mute appealing,
Invite us to put on their happy mood.
But sadly beautiful are such revealings
To him who worships them in solitude.

Perchance it may not be ; the things we cherish
Like shadows may appear, then pass away ;
We will not droop, though all our best hopes perish,
But wait the dawning of a better day.

We will be strong, will calm the heart's emotion
With thoughts of high emprise and valorous strife ;
If what we long for may not be our portion,
Our longings still will lead to nobler life.

Then, soul, be brave ! Thou hast thy work and station,

Thou hast thy task to do, thy prize to win,
And be thy thought that this sublime creation
Is more sublime that thou hast lived therein.

1849.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

FIRST PARISH, KENNEBUNK, 1865.

ANOTHER year, through changing days,
Its rapid course has rolled,
And now we bring our songs of praise
For mercies manifold.

From giant wrong, Thou, God, hast wrought
Our country's glad release ;
Out of confusion, order brought,
From strife and bloodshed, peace.

And when our way with fear was dark,
And harsh seemed duty's call,
'T was strength to know that Thou dost mark
The sparrows when they fall.

When oft our hearts felt all their pains
For those gone on before,
We seemed to hear triumphal strains
Sound from some brighter shore.

To Thee our grateful songs we raise,
Who, through the Christ hast given,
Amid these toiling, earthly ways,
Such gleams of love and heaven.

AT SEA, SEPTEMBER, 1868.

ONE solitary ship upon the heaving ocean
Like some huge sporting monster leaps and rolls,
Yet bears serenely, 'mid the wild commotion,
This precious freight, — two hundred living souls.

Above, I see the sails, with full inflation,
Wooing the breeze which wafts us on our way ;
Below, I hear the mighty, strong vibration
Of iron pulses beating night and day.

I see the master, like some necromancer,
His sextant-sceptre wield with playful ease,
And bid the midday sun his questions answer,
And tell the curving path along the seas.

I know that in his solitary quarters,
Directed by the compass' guiding wand,
The helmsman keeps his way along the waters,
And holds the toiling ship in full command.

I hear, with rapid, double intonations,
Announce how quick the hours their measure fill,
The bell, which calls the watchers to their station,
To keep the course, and shun each threatening ill.

What though the clouds send down their wild defiance,

And stir to foaming wrath the waters blue,
The iron heart still beats in calm reliance,
The opposing waves divide, and we pass through.

Yet not alone to skill of man defending
We trust, to iron hearts, nor iron wall,
For over land and sea one heaven is bending,
And God's good providence is keeping all.

Oh, wondrous thought of providential guiding,
Thus, Father, blending with our earthly lot ;
Though tossed on seas or in strange lands abiding,
We cannot go where thy dear love is not.

LONDON.¹

Up to my chamber door
Is borne the mingled roar
Of this great town, — the clattering of many feet,
The market cries, the knells
Of hours on deep-mouthed bells,
The iron hoofs and wheels upon the stony street.

And, mingled in with these
Wild, stormy symphonies,
I hear the undertones of household love and care,
The sounds of home, the wild
Exuberance of the child,
The infant's prattle, and the old man's grateful
prayer.

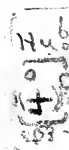
Sounds Rachel's cry distressed,
More keen because suppressed ;
Ambition's shout, which youthful hearts undaunted
raise :
And from the storied aisles
Of old cathedral piles
The organ's surging notes of penitence and praise.

¹ Written at sea, May 4, 1869.

And from the crowded lairs
In sunless thoroughfares,
Where crime and want and sorrow have untiring
birth,
Ascends the mournful cry
Of pain and misery,
The gambler's oath, the drunkard's wild, delirious
mirth.

So, O great town, my sense
Takes in thy voice immense,
Which, like the smoky cloud above thee, lifts and
floats ;
It is a braided band
Of many a different strand,
A mighty diapason of many changing notes.

With day, in murmurs low,
Begins that tidal flow
Whose crowding waves with resonance the city fill ;
They swell and rage and beat,
And drown each lane and street,
Then, past the midnight hour, retire, and all is still.





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